

## University of Dayton eCommons

---

News Releases

Marketing and Communications

---

4-22-2016

# An Unforgettable Legacy

University of Dayton

Follow this and additional works at: [https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news\\_rls](https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls)

---

### Recommended Citation

University of Dayton. "An Unforgettable Legacy" (2016). [http://wayback.archive-it.org/4727/20160920162149/https://www.udayton.edu/news/articles/2016/04/president\\_daniel\\_j\\_curran\\_farewell.php](http://wayback.archive-it.org/4727/20160920162149/https://www.udayton.edu/news/articles/2016/04/president_daniel_j_curran_farewell.php)

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Marketing and Communications at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in News Releases by an authorized administrator of eCommons. For more information, please contact [frice1@udayton.edu](mailto:frice1@udayton.edu), [mschlangen1@udayton.edu](mailto:mschlangen1@udayton.edu).

## NEWS



*Friday April 22, 2016*

## An Unforgettable Legacy

It's a truism in higher education: change tends to happen slowly on a college campus. When Daniel J. Curran, 65, steps down as the University of Dayton's president this summer after a 14-year tenure, he will have turned that adage on its head.

Known as a bold, forward-thinking leader, Curran worked with the campus community to strategically position the University as a major Catholic research university, enroll some of the largest, most academically talented classes in school history and dramatically expand the University of Dayton's reach from the Great Miami River to China.

"Dan Curran arrived at UD sensing that we could expand our footprint as a top Catholic university both nationally and internationally, in addition to deepening our role as a strategic leader in the Dayton region. He has followed through on all of these fronts, demonstrating impressive agility, creativity and foresight. He has built upon the resilient foundation of our Catholic and Marianist mission," said Paul Benson, provost.

The University of Dayton will celebrate Curran's legacy during his final days as the University's 18th president and first lay leader since the school was founded in 1850.

This month includes three celebrations — a prayer service with Dayton alumni, an outdoor luncheon with faculty and staff, and a spring carnival with students. Community leaders and donors will be invited to a June 4 dinner designed to pay tribute to the outgoing president and raise funds for a project close to his heart — the University of Dayton's Human Rights Center.

For more information on the farewell events, visit the related link.

The accolades began in January when the Dayton Development Coalition honored Curran with its leadership award. He's the only person to receive it twice. In February, the Red Scare, the rowdy student group that pumps up the crowd during Flyer basketball games, presented "Dr. Dan" with a personalized Flyer basketball jersey with the Number 1 on the back, and the crowd responded with a standing ovation. This month, nearly 250 University of Dayton students took to the Schuster Center stage in a rousing Celebration of the Arts performance, a ritual that Curran started as part of his presidential installation in 2003.

This spring, a new coffee table book, *Reading the Signs of the Times: The University of Dayton in the Twenty-First Century*, will be available for sale through the University of Dayton Bookstore and offered as a free e-book for alumni and supporters. Filled with bold, compelling photography and prose, the book touches upon the University's rich history and builds on the upward momentum that started during the tenure of Brother Raymond L. Fitz, S.M. and accelerated during Curran's presidency.

Highly energetic and personable, Curran has spent much of his final year trying to make the transition seamless for his successor, Eric Spina, former vice chancellor and provost at Syracuse University. On a farewell tour of major alumni cities — from Chicago to St. Louis — he has surprised several groups by introducing Spina and asking for support for the incoming leader. The two recently traveled to Washington, D.C. with other regional leaders for the Dayton Development Coalition's annual "Community Leader Fly-In," which promotes economic development initiatives in the region. They're also working closely with campus search committees to fill several key administrative roles before Spina takes office.

Curran's style has impressed Steve Cobb, chairman of Henny Penny and a 1986 alumnus who serves as chair of the University of Dayton's board of trustees.

"When I first met Dan 12 years ago, I remember thinking that he was so likeable, approachable and humble. I had no idea that, later in life, I would have the opportunity to see those authentic life attributes up close and personal," said Cobb, who's served on the board for nine years.

"While he has many high-end leadership skills, perhaps his sweet spot has been his ability to engage and connect with students. The combination of his warm and inviting nature along with a visionary approach has propelled not only the University but also an entire community to soar to new levels."

When Curran became president in 2002, he said he saw "a well managed university poised for greatness." Since then, the University has nearly doubled its acreage with two major acquisitions from NCR Corp. while changing its enrollment strategy to become a more selective university that attracts most of its students from outside Ohio — and many from around the world. Its footprint now stretches to China, where the University operates a freestanding institute that educates students all year round.

The University's endowment, first-year applications, endowed faculty positions, sponsored research and total assets have virtually doubled or more. Student retention and entering test scores stand at all-time highs. Dayton Flyer student-athletes continue to boast graduation rates consistently among the highest in the country, and the overall winning percentage in all sports is better than any other time in school history.

Faculty say they appreciate the way he's boosted the faculty ranks by nearly 20 percent and increased the University's national stature in research.

"President Curran's commitment to recruit and competitively hire top-tier faculty scholars who are leaders in their fields of expertise has elevated the research profile and prestige of the University of Dayton and created synergy," said Carissa Krane, professor of biology and 2015-2016 president of the Academic Senate. "That has led to continued success in recruiting students and expanding experiential learning opportunities for them."

Curran doesn't point to the numbers when he looks back on his tenure. "I am most proud of the cumulative successes of our students, alumni, faculty and staff," he's often said. "They have spread the University of Dayton's excellence and reputation around the world."

A sociologist by training, Curran will take a one-year sabbatical, then join the faculty as a professor. He will teach, conduct research and serve as executive-in-residence for Asian affairs in the University of Dayton China Institute in Suzhou, China.

For more information, contact Cilla Shindell, director of media relations, at 937-229-3257 or [shindell@udayton.edu](mailto:shindell@udayton.edu).